

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2005 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 700 (Senator Green)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Ways and Means

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Election Law - Election Judges - Minors

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This bill exempts a minor who is 17 years old from work hour restrictions under State law so that the minor may be appointed and serve as an election judge. The exemption allows a minor to work more than 12 hours on election day only, subject to consent from at least one parent or guardian.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** Altering the work hour restrictions for minors who serve as election judges would not affect governmental finances.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** A minor may not be employed or allowed to be employed for more than five consecutive hours without a nonworking period of at least one-half hour. During a calendar day the total school and work hours of a minor may not exceed 12 hours and the minor must have at least 8 consecutive hours that are not school or work hours.

The Labor Commissioner may grant an exception to the restrictions if the commissioner determines that there will be no hazard to the health or welfare of the minor.

Generally, an election judge must be a registered voter who resides in the county for which the election judge is appointed unless a qualified individual residing in the county cannot be found with reasonable effort, then the local board may appoint a registered voter residing in any part of the State.

A minor at least 17 years old who is appointed to be an election judge and who is too young to be a registered voter shall demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the local board, that the minor meets all of the other qualifications for registration in the county. An election judge must be able to speak, read, and write the English language.

**Background:** The nonpartisan Election Center reported that 90% of the 1.4 million poll workers nationwide who worked during the 2000 election were over the age of 60. The average poll worker's age, according to the National Association of Secretaries of State, is 72. Indiana, Pennsylvania, and New Hampshire have passed similar laws allowing minors to work as poll workers.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Allegany County, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Maryland State Board of Elections, Baltimore City, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 22, 2005  
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